

RELO Manama Newsletter

US Embassy Regional English Language Programs Office

RELO Rebecca Smoak is replacing RELO Wilcox starting late May, 2005. For a brief bio-data of the new RELO see page 5.

RELO Visits All American Corners in Oman

During the week of January 8-13, 2005, RELO Manama George Wilcox visited four of the five American Corners (ACs) in Oman, in the process

them. This followed up on the initial visit to the American Corner in Salalah, Oman, made in August 2004 by RELO Assistant Fatema Hashem, which also included seminars on using computers in education and English Language Teaching (ELT). At the AC in Rustaq, RELO Wilcox addressed the 33 participants on the Teaching of ELT and Critical Thinking, on the use of Internet resources and on related topics. The next day to a combined audience of over 100 students, teachers

and administrators at the AC in Al-Buraimi, he outlined RELO Office Products, Services and Programs, at the same time giving guidance on how EFL Professionals can take responsibility for their own professional development and also inculcate in their students a regard for their responsibilities to society as a whole. Visits earlier in the week to the ACs in Muscat and Sohar brought the RELO Office in direct contact with key faculty and AC staff at the hosting institutions.



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giving seminars to participating EFL Professionals at several of

Developing Educational Leaders– Kuwait

On March 13th, 2005, the Senior English Language Fellow (S/ELF) in Bahrain, Anne Kalvestrand, conducted a

day-long training session at the Ministry of Education in Kuwait on "Developing Educational Leaders." About 120 English department

chairmen and mid-level managers, including Syrian, Moroccan, Egyptian and Kuwaiti educators who serve in the country, participated. The training

Developing Educational Leaders– Kuwait (Continued)

emphasized educational leadership, team building and supervision. The "Educational Leaders of Kuwait" training equipped educators to improve teacher evaluation, lesson planning, and critical thinking

skills. Participants produced action plans to set goals and implement the skills from the seminar. The Training Directorate is now able to focus future training events on the goals educators identified at the "Educational

Leaders of Kuwait" seminar.

Mid-Year English Language Fellow Conference in Alexandria

English Language Fellows (ELF) from Algeria, Bahrain, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Syria and Tunisia gathered in Alexandria, January 17-19, to discuss challenges and accomplishments of the EL Fellows program in the region. They were joined by Regional English Language Officers from Cairo, Tunis and Amman; other Public Affairs Section (PAS) representatives from Iraq, Algiers, Cairo, Lebanon, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Bahrain and Amman; the regional EL Fellows specialist from the School for International Training and the director of the Office of English Language Programs. Sessions were devoted to program design and defining and measuring success in

program sustainability. While participants did not produce comprehensive and precise criteria for program success, all agreed that their work was making a difference, both in terms of their personal professional development, and in terms of the needs of their host institutions.



The Cairo Crowd

They unanimously agreed that the value of the ELF program stemmed equally from the professional skills Fellows bring with them, and from their presence abroad as positive representatives of the US. Prior to the ELF Conference a number of PAS representatives from 13



ELFs in Alex.

different Arab countries underwent training to better handle English Language programming at their posts. Following the training event and prior to the Alex. Conference the Fellows with a number of RELOs attended the American University of Cairo (AUC) English Language Conference. The Fellows made about 14 presentations, which represented 20% of the total presentations of the Conference.

RELO Inaugurates Programming at American Corners– UAE

The week of February 5-9, 2005, Bahrain-based Regional English Language Officer (RELO) George Wilcox conducted seminars and consulted with key EFL professionals at American Corners (ACs), Ministries of Education and universities in five of the seven emirates of the United Arab Emir-

ates (UAE). Working with 150 TESOL professional colleagues, including some key decision makers, RELO Wilcox focused his activities on providing information on RELO programs, resources and services ELT professionals can use for their own professional development. One highlight of Wilcox's

trip was his visit to the ACs at the UAE University in Al Ain and at the Fujairah men's campus of the Higher Colleges of Technology.



Mentor Training Revisited– Bahrain

From March 1 to March 15 (2005) leading Language Teacher Educator Betty Leaver conducted three intensive workshops at Bahrain's Ministry of Education for 20 intermediate school prospective English Language teacher mentors, 25 of their primary school colleagues and 25 Curriculum

Specialists (with the later 3-day session being conducted in Arabic via a translator). The Ministry's continuing commitment to English Language teaching is reflected in their third request in less than 18 months to have Dr. Leaver share her expertise in this very specialized area. Leaver's work will enable those teachers and

curriculum specialists eventually chosen to be mentors to better assist their English teacher colleagues in providing quality English classes to their intermediate and primary school students. With the completion of this third program, a total of 170 mentors have now been trained by Dr. Leaver since Sept. 2003.

Initiating Tsunami Relief Project– Bahrain

To help motivate students and teachers to become more socially involved with the wider world, Senior EL Fellow Anne Kalvestrand and the team of curriculum specialists at Bahrain's Ministry of Education recently designed and promoted a Tsunami Relief Project

for public high school students. On February 28, 2005, Ms. Kalvestrand met with 25 high school department chairmen and explained the Outreach Project. The team envisions these efforts as an opportunity for Bahraini students to exercise their leadership

skills and recognize their role in international events. The Outreach Project For Tsunami Relief is coordinated by the English Department chairmen at each high school and sponsored by the Ministry of Education.



Senior EL Fellow

Two University English Language Program (ELP) Leaders Travel to TESOL

In March-April 2005 the RELO Office sponsored a two-week professional development and networking opportunity for two key university ELP leaders from the region to take part in the San Antonio, Texas TESOL

conference and a follow-up visit to similar ELP programs in Utah and Washington, DC. While on the trip the two leaders were able to make important contacts with TESOL professionals from around the world

and to initiate a possible accreditation process for their English Language Centers with the Commission on ELP Accreditation (CEA) in Alexandria, Virginia.

RELO Organizes Third Arabian Gulf Networking Meeting

On March 8, 2005, key contacts working in

“Bridging” Programs. This meeting, the third of

important a role teacher and student motivation



plays in the improvement of English language instruction throughout the region.

All participants agreed to remain in email contact to pursue and further develop several of the ideas they had shared.

University level Intensive English Programs in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE met for three hours prior to the opening of the eleventh annual TESOL Arabia conference to focus on common problems and solutions in their University English

its kind organized by RELO Manama George Wilcox and RELO Assistant Fatema Hashem, brought together sixteen people, including two staff members from PAS Dubai and RELO Cairo George Scholz. One tangible result of the meeting was the realization by all of how





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The **Office of English Language Programs**, a section of Public Diplomacy, is dedicated to the teaching and learning of English. The Regional English Language Program Office (RELO) assists the English teaching community in the host country to develop the language competency of professionals and the successor generation. The RELO works with English language professionals at many levels but concentrates on programs which train and provide professional development for English teachers and teacher trainers. The RELO assigned to Manama, Bahrain, also works with the countries of Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

RELO Smoak's (NEW RELO MANAMA) Bio

Rebecca Barr Smoak is an ESL professional who has worked in the United States, Morocco, Greece, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates. During her more than 20 years in this field she has been responsible for teaching, teacher training, program design, materials writing, curriculum development, and educational administration. Much of her experience has been in the area of

ESP. In Egypt as a consultant on a Binational Fulbright Commission project she organized national ESP conferences, and designed and delivered ESP teacher training courses. She also implemented strategic planning, program management and evaluation initiatives at ESP centers. She has also developed training courses in the design, development, marketing, deliv-

ery and evaluation of workplace language courses. At Dubai Men's College in the United Arab Emirates Rebecca developed and taught ESOL courses designed to prepare young Emiratis for the workplace. She was also on the curriculum team for the new Zayed University and headed the curriculum review and revision team at the Higher Colleges of Technology.

Subsequently, Rebecca served as Supervisor of Student Services and College Registrar for Dubai Men's College. Her previous post was Regional English Language Officer for North Africa, based at the US Embassy in Tunis. She is looking forward to serving in Bahrain and the Arabian Gulf.